Decline in fertility of land in Western U.P.

†144. SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that fertile land in Western Uttar Pradesh is turning into barren land;

(b) the reasons for decreasing fertility of the land; and

(c) the steps being taken to improve the fertility of the land?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) Over exploitation of natural resources, imbalanced and indiscriminate use of chemical fertilizers and lesser use of organic matter over years have resulted deterioration of soil health and fertility in the intensively cultivated areas, especially in Western Uttar Pradesh.

(c) The State Government of Uttar Pradesh has intimated the following steps to improve soil health and fertility during 2009.10:

(i) Green Manuring in 59,630 ha.

(ii) Demonstration of 58444 Vermi/NADEP Compost.

(iii) Testing of 5,79,000 soil sample for the recommendation of balanced use of fertilizers/manures and distribution of 5,79,000 Soil Health Cards.

(iv) Opening of 63 Tehsil Level Soil Testing Labs.

(v) Distribution of 816706 bio-fertilizer packets.

(vi) Distribution of 34457 metric tones of gypsum.

The Government of India is implementing two major schemes in the country; (i) National Project on Organic Farming to promote organic manures for improvement of soil health; and (ii) National Project on Management of Soil Health and Fertility to promote soil test based balanced and judicious use of chemical fertilizers in conjunction with organic manures.

Container freight station at Kochi

145. SHRI ABDUL WAHAB PEEVEE: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has decided to set up a container freight station at Kochi in Kerala in near future;

(b) if so, the cost involved in the project; and

(c) the jobs likely to be created?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) Yes, Sir. Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC), a Public Sector Undertaking under the

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.